

February 12, 2019

To: House Human Services and Housing Committee

From: Gabrielle Guedon, Executive Director, Oregon Self Advocacy Coalition

RE: Support for SB 608 providing basic protections for people who rent their homes

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Chair Keny Guyer and Members of the Committee:

The Oregon Self Advocacy Coalition (OSAC) is a statewide nonprofit organization made up of individual self-advocates and 18 local self-advocacy groups. We support people to advocate in all aspects of their lives. Housing is important to us because it helps us be members of our community and have a safe place to call our own.

Communities are stronger when all people participate. All people have gifts and weaknesses that mix together in a community to make everyone stronger. People with disabilities are just like everyone else, they just may need more assistance. It is important to have a community with people of different interests because we all lead our best lives together in community.

We support SB 608 because it will build stability in people's lives by providing protection from no cause evictions and high rent increases. When people with disabilities find a home that works for them, we are more successful. Our support stabilizes when our home stabilizes. This allows us to find jobs and connect with our communities.

We have members who have lost their homes because of no cause evictions or their rent was raised too high.

One of our members had been living in her apartment for thirty years with her son when she received a no cause eviction. She was forced into a

shelter because there are no apartments that are available in Medford. She was separated from her son, and has been living in the shelter for months. Staff at Living Opportunities, a Developmental Disability service provider, have been spending a huge amount of time every week trying to find her a new place, and also supporting staff at the shelter to help her. She would like to be reunited with her son and she would like to have a stable home.

Another OSAC member had his rent increased really high. To avoid being homeless, he was forced to move in with someone he does not like. He could not find another affordable housing option. Now he is feeling unstable.

Please support SB 608 so all people who rent their homes can have basic protections.